

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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STATE FOR EUR/WE
PASS TO AMBASSADOR GARDNER

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN,IT
SUBJ: PRESS REACTION--CARTER/ANDREOTTI MEETING

1. TWO OF ITALY'S MOST IMPORTANT WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINES TODAY
REPORT ON PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT
CARTER AND INTERPRET THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THEIR TALKS.

2. MASSIMO CONTI IN JUNE 13 ISSUE OF "PANORAMA "
(CARTER'S NIHIL OBSTAT) SAYS ANDREOTTI HAS SUCCEEDED IN CONVINCING
WASHINGTON TO ACCEPT PCI PARTICIPATION IN PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY.
WHILE POINTING OUT THAT CARTER'S AGREEMENT "CERTAINLY DOES NOT
SIGNIFY THAT HE IS READY TO ACCEPT A FUTURE PRESENCE OF THE COMMUNISTS

IN THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT ", CONTI NEVERTHELESS CLAIMS THAT
ANDREOTTI WAS ABLE TO "DISSIPATE THE LAST AMERICAN DOUBTS
ABOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PCI IN THE GOVERNING MAJORITY,
THEREBY OBTAINING DEFINITIVE AMERICAN GUARANTEE FOR HIS INITIATIVE."

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3. REPORTING FROM WASHINGTON, CONTI SAYS THAT CARTER'S ACCEPTANCE
OF THE NEW MAJORITY "IS SEEN BY MANY AS A SUBSTANTIAL CORRECTION
TO THE AMERICAN POLICY TOWARDS THE PCI ANNOUNCED LAST JANUARY
WHICH EXCLUDED THE COMMUNISTS FROM AMONG THE RANKS OF THE DEMOCRATIC
FORCES."

4. CONTI ALSO CITES "A CONGRESSIONAL REPORT REQUESTED

BY SENATOR BIDEN" AS FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT THE USG IS NOW "MORE RELAXED ABOUT THE RISKS THAT THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE WOULD BRING FOR THE U.S."

5. IN A SEPARATE "PANORAMA "INTERVIEW PCI DEPUTY AND DIRECTORATE MEMBER GIAN CARLO PAJETTA SAID THAT "THE UNITED STATES SEEMS TO HVE ASSUMED MORE REALISTIC AND MORE POSITIVE POSITIONS ", ADDING THAT PCI HAD "NEVER GIVEN VERY MUCH WEIGHT "TO THE DEPARTMENT'S

JANUARY 12 STATEMENT.

6. CORRADO INCERTI, WRITING IN THE JUNE 16 ISSUE OF "L'EUROPEO " DRAWS OPPOSITE CONCLUSION ABOUT U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARDS PCI--" U.S. POLICY TOWARDS THE PCI HAS CHANGED --FOR THE WORSE -- BUT INDICATES THAT JANUARY 12 STATEMENT HAS BEEN OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS." STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS WHO COUNT, THOSE WHO REALLY INFLUENCE THE PRESIDENT AND AMERICAN POLICY....HAVE RESOLVED THEIR DIFFERENCES. THEY ARE ALL AGAINST THE ENTRANCE OF THE PCI IN THE GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, THEY ALL AGREE THAT THE POLICY SHOULD BE TO WEAR DOWN THE PCI BY INVOLVING IT IN NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY."

7. INCERTI ALSO CLAIMS THAT CARTE WAS "PERSONALLY CONVINCED BY ANDREOTTI'S ARGUMENTS (DURING JULY 1977 MEETING) OF THE NEED TO OBTAIN COMMUNIST SUPPORT FOR HIS GOVERNMENT." BUT THAT " THE HAWKS FORCED THE GOVERNMENT TO ISSUE THE FAMOUS (JANUARY 12) UNCLASSIFIED

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SIGNAL : WE DO NOT FAVOR COMMUNISTS IN THE GOVERNMENT." THE VEHEMENT REACTION TO THIS INTERFERENCE FORCED THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO UNDERSTAND THAT WAS THE WRONG TACTIC, AND 'ITALIAN CASE "HAS NOT BEEN MENTIONED SINCE."

8. TO PREVENT THE EROSION OF THE JANUARY 12 STATEMENT AND MAINTAIN ITS USEFULNESS AS A CENTRAL POINT OF REFERENCE FOR US POLICY TOWARD ITALY, EMBASSY STRONGLY BELIEVES IT SHOULD ISSUE A STATEMENT ALONG FOLLOWING LINES : BEGIN TEXT SEVERAL NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE STORIES HAVE APPEARED IN THE ITALIAN PRESS IN RECENT DAYS SPECULATING ON THE NATURE AND CONTENT OF THE CONVERSATION WHICH TOOK PLACE IN WASHINGTON BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI ON MAY 31. AMONG THE ALLEGATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE PRESS ARE CLAIMS THAT THE POSITION OF THE USG ON THE QUESTION OF THE INFLUENCE AND PARTICIPATION OF COMMUNIST PARTIES IN WESTERN EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS HAS CHANGED. THE FACT IS THAT THE UNITED STATES POSITION ON THIS ISSUE REMAINS AS EXPRESSED IN THE DECLARATION ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE ON JANUARY 12, 1978. END TEXT.

9. AMBASSADOR GARDNER IS AWARE OF THIS RECOMMENDATION AND

AGREES WITH IT .

10. BEFORE ISSUING STATEMENT, EMBASSY WOULD INFORM PRIME
MINISTER'S OFFICE,AS A MATTER OF COURTESY.HOLMES

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